

REMARKS

I. Status of Claims

After the above amendments, claims 1-6 and 8-16 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 5, 14, 15, and 16 are independent.

II. Entry of Amendments

Applicants respectfully requests entry of the above-presented amendments to the claims. By the above amendment, claim 1 is amended and claims 14, 15, and 16 are added. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the scope of the claim, and, as will be discussed below, Applicants believe the amendment obviates the pending rejection. If the Examiner disagrees, the amendment clarifies the issues for appeal, and, therefore, places the application in better condition for appeal. With respect to newly added claims 14, 15, and 16, these claims are claims 9, 11, and 13, rewritten into independent form. Since the Examiner indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten into independent form, entry of the amendment adding these new claims is proper. Accordingly, entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

III. Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 102(e) && 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,494,712 to Godwin, Jr. et al. Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent App. No. 2002/0070304 to Hong et al. Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,913,868 to Katahira et al. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,921,220 to Primosch et al.

In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that drive flange 60 of the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent constitutes a reel gear, and the drive wheel 66 constitutes a reel disc. Applicants respectfully disagree with this characterization. The reel gear of claim 1 receives a driving force from a motor or other suitable driving source, as discussed in Applicants' specification at p. 5, ll.

11-15. Accordingly, the drive flange 60 of the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent is not properly characterized as a reel gear according to claim 1.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to clarify this distinction, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the amendment. Claim 1 now requires a *“reel gear with a plurality of gear teeth formed along an outer circumference.”* The Godwin, Jr. et al. patent does not disclose or suggest a plurality of gear teeth formed on the drive flange 60. Thus, claim 1 is not obvious in view of the Godwin, Jr. et al. patent.

Claim 1 (and its dependent claims) is therefore allowable, and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

IV. Allowed and Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner allowed claims 2, 5, and 6, and indicated that claims 9, 11, and 13 would be allowable if rewritten into independent format. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability of claims 9, 11, and 13, and have rewritten those claims into new claims 14, 15, and 16, respectively. Allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is believed that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and notice to that effect is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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